

Khuyala EDC –monitoring visit November 2015

Paul and Carole Keeley visited Khuyala on 3rd November to check on the progress of the installation of a fence around the centre and planting of trees inside the fence. This was funded by a generous donation from Sean and Vas Toner made in the summer. A fence was urgently needed as the centre had no barrier to prevent children wandering or running into the road.



This photo shows the newly erected fence with the children standing in the gateway. There is a current fashion in Kenya for big steel gates but these are expensive. We have suggested that a locally constructed wooden gate would suffice as the school has so many other needs.



The children love being photographed and jostled with each other to get into every shot.

We found that the fence had been constructed and trees planted just inside it. There were 30 *Grevillea* which are quick growing timber trees, 23 indigenous trees and 5 mangoes



Grevillea robusta



Markhamia lutea

These trees are very small but within 3 years they will be over 2 metres high giving needed shade to the school grounds as well as a more effective barrier.

Khuyala were encouraged to think carefully of ways to erect the fence within the available budget as all too often builders supply inflated estimates and money is wasted. Joseph Wafula, the old man who owns the land on which the school is built, cut 3 big trees from his own land to provide the fence posts. He will be paid 11,200/- for these which is much below the cost of buying from a wood yard, and Khuyala have agreed to pay this themselves. There was a further 4,800/- to be paid to the labourers who cut the trees and 700/- to transport them to site. There were not quite enough poles so 1,500/- was spent to buy the remainder. A single roll of wire was purchased at 4,200/- [although they would have liked a second to add further strands above and below the 5 that are now there]. 62 posts were inserted at a cost of 25/- for workers to dig each hole –total 1550/-, 2 bags of cement @850/- each plus 15/- transport –total 1850/-, 5 kg nails -1000/- and labour costs to erect wire 2800/-. Total cost without payment to Joseph for trees = 18,400 /- which is about £123. The remainder of the donation was spent on purchasing the tree seedlings and there is a small amount left with which we hope to purchase some low hedging plants to fill the gaps between the trees and add thickness to the lower part of the fence.



Here are Joseph Wafula and the pastor of Khuyala church showing the fence at the side of the school next to the toilets.

While we were there we asked some general questions about the school to find out how they are managing. There are currently 2 teachers to 150 children. There was a third teacher but he left because the meagre salary was not paid regularly. Teachers are paid 1500/- per month [approx £10] which is funded by the small fees paid by the children. The fees are 550/- per child per term [about £3.50] and they are allowed to pay this in installments. However, many children are total orphans [i.e. both parents dead] and nobody is willing to pay their fees. These children will be living with neighbours or sometimes relatives. There is some hope of getting fees from those that live with relatives such as aunts and grandmothers. The money is collected by the teachers and used to pay their own salaries plus buy any equipment [chalk, paper, pencils etc] and also some is given to Joseph Wafula to buy food for the daily meal that the children are given.



Preparation of the daily meal –currently performed in the playground as the kitchen fell down. Traditional “3 stones” cooking is very fuel intensive.



Food is a simple maize porridge which we would like them to supplement with some vegetables. After encouragement from Paul the school has planted a small plot of vegetables at one end of the school grounds.

We asked the teachers, pastor and Joseph what they thought were the school's most urgent needs should any more money become available. They requested classroom furniture –tables, desks, cupboards as well as teachers' guide books [neither teacher has been trained] and writing materials –crayons, pencils, sharpeners. We agreed that Joseph would visit the local prison to find out the cost of school desks with built in benches.



It was hard to take pictures of the classrooms as the kids wanted to be in all the photographs and every time I moved they all moved with me! Here you can see the sort of benches that they use and note that there are only two rows with the back of the classroom being empty. The majority of the kids need to sit on the ground.

Both teachers were very keen for us to pay for them to be trained on a part time basis involving 3 weeks at training college 3 times a year for 2 years. They didn't know how much this would cost but we explained that it was almost certainly beyond the means of SGG. The teachers also mentioned that the children needed some outdoor playthings such as balls, skipping ropes, swings/slides.



The children do not have anything to encourage play in the playground.

We felt that a simple kitchen with an improved stove was quite a high priority. A visit to Joseph Wafula's home revealed the fact that his wife has been on a training course to make "rocket jikos". These are simple stoves where the fuel is burnt in an enclosure so that the majority of heat is not lost to the surrounding air. These burn significantly less wood and wood is no longer freely available in Kenya but needs to be purchased. The cost to build one of these was estimated to be about 5000/- [around £35]. This would include cement plus labour. We discussed a shelter for this but did not come to any conclusion as they began to talk about needing security i.e. a lockable building and a night watchmen and such costs are beyond the means of SGG. We left them to consider how this could be done cheaply.

In spite of improvements there is still not quite enough money to feed the children. For 5-6 years we were able to donate £600 / group / year for feeding to Khuyala as well as 9 other such groups. Over this time we have been encouraging and funding income generation schemes in the hope that they would no longer require direct funding for food as funding sources have been hard to maintain. A final payment was given for food for December while we were there.

